SARON MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)
510 Main Street
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Phone: 269-983-1273
Facebook:www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

The Rev. Joan Oleson, Pastor
Home: 269-983-2475
Email: oleson@saronlutheran.org
Patrick Blanchard, Vicar
Cell: 616-460-7150
Email: pblanchard13@live.com
Marcus Roll, Music Director
Email: roll1mc@gmail.com
Irma Gorman, Organist
Amanda Bradley, Admin Assistant
Megan Savage, Bookkeeper
Email: financial@saronlutheran.org
Emily Gaul, Child Care

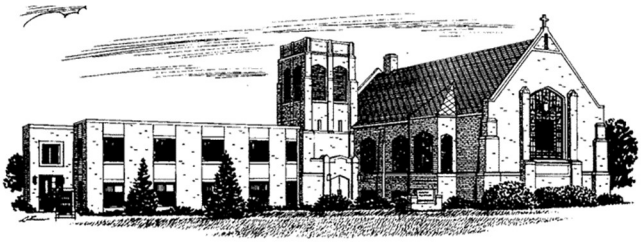
Typical Sunday at Saron:
Fall, Winter and Spring (beginning Sept 12):
8:30 & 11am Worship
Nursery Available
9:40 Learning Hour for Ages 2-Adult

Summer of 2022 (beginning June 5):
9:30 Holy Communion
Zoom and On-Location
Nursery Available
No Learning Hour

We hold in prayer:
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton,
Presiding Bishop, ELCA
The Rev. Dr. Craig Satterlee, Bishop of the
North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA
The Episcopal Diocese of Western MI

Our Companion Synods:
Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras
Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
Lutheran Church of Latvia

Saron's Mission:
Joyfully sharing God's love for all!!



PASTOR ARTICLE FOR OCTOBER 2021

I'm ready for summer to begin. Really, I am. But here it is, almost October. We are making our way in a new programmatic year, keeping some of our pre-pandemic ways and adapting to new ways. I am grateful for renewed and faithful participation and thinking about and preparing for what will be.

As the weather begins to change, it is a good time to stop and reflect on the many aspects of God's good creation. We will do just that at worship on October 3 when we will focus on the care of creation. In preparation for that celebration, I invite you to send a picture of your pet or a favorite nature spot – perhaps a place you have visited or a flower in your garden or your favorite lake sunset. We also welcome a family pic, however you define family. **Send your photo/s to the church at info@saronlutheran.org by Thursday, September 30, and it will be displayed at worship.**

Our Care of Creation Sunday will be followed with the start of our stewardship emphasis. Although we could say it launches our stewardship emphasis as stewardship is the care of all that God has given us, including the world and its creatures, large and small. What we will hear is that Stewardship is "Heart" work. We will ask, "where do we find our hearts this season?"

I am grateful for all of you as together we consider our call and mission of *"joyfully sharing God's love for all!!!"* That "all" includes our siblings in Christ, our neighbors across the world, as well as all of creation, the earth and all that fills it. We may find this mission challenging and not always easy. But at its core is the heart of God which is love. It is a boundless love. It is the love of Jesus. It is a love for all seasons.

Pastor Joan

There were no changes to our Covid-19 precautions after the September Church Council meeting. We will continue to wear masks in the building and offer an 8:30am worship service option on Sundays with no congregational singing for those who feel more comfortable without it. As always, we are monitoring the situation and will adjust as things develop.

General Information

OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Joan and/or Vicar Patrick
Monday-Thursday Mornings
Amanda Bradley (Admin Assistant):
Mondays & Thursdays 8:00am-noon
Wednesdays as needed
Helping Hands Office Volunteers:
Wednesdays 9:15am-11am (approx)
Megan Savage (Bookkeeper):
Tuesdays & Thursdays 5:30pm

When Pastor is out of town, emergency pastoral care information can be obtained by calling the church office (269/983-1273) or contacting the council president.

Note: Emails for Pastor should be addressed to oleson@saronlutheran.org to ensure privacy. Emails to Amanda and the church office should be sent to info@saronlutheran.org.

Caring and Sharing

IN OUR PRAYERS

Richard Schalon is at the Whitcomb Tower Retirement Center, St. Joseph; **Bernice Koski** and **Kathleen Preston** at Woodland Terrace, Bridgman.

Happy Birthday Wishes to Saron's Members!
October 2021

Oct	2	Steven Cook
		Judith Wedde
	4	James Oleson
		Mary Kynast
	8	Jonathon Peterson
	10	Hannah Raye Breyen
	15	Dan Fortenbacher
	12	Andrew Olson
	13	Kerrie Hoodlebrink
	14	Pauline Ngonyani
	15	Elias Coar
		Betsy Becker
	16	Kris Weber
	18	Kathrine Ulrey
	19	Robert Baumgartner
	20	Keith Stevens
	24	Matthew Baumgartner
	26	Pastor Gary Cowall
		Amanda Bradley
	29	Donald Moely
	31	Ivan Kiessel

Happy Anniversary Wishes to Saron's Members!
October 2021

Oct	2	Steven & Cynthia Schmidt
	6	Robert & Charlene Baumgartner
	13	David & Susan Bailey
		Jason & Jessica Crockett

"God's Blessings for a very happy day and year round!"

If there is anyone who has been omitted, or, if the dates are incorrect from the birthday and anniversary list, please call the church office at 269/983-1273. Thank you.

Where is Saron's heart?

In October, we begin our Stewardship Emphasis for calendar year 2022. This is one of the questions to be explored through Scripture (Bible study), worship, and conversations.

- Mission moments will be offered on October 10, 17, and 24 during the 11am worship service.
- A Prayer Vigil with both on-location and virtual options will be held on Friday, October 15 from noon to 7pm.
- A single-session stewardship-focused Bible study will be offered four times: October 19 at Saron at 6pm, October 21 at Saron at 9:30am with Zoom option, October 24 at Saron at 9:40am, and October 27 at 7:30pm over Zoom.
- On Commitment Sunday, October 31, we will respond to God's goodness to us by offering our commitments for annual giving. Following the service, we will celebrate our ability to join in God's work.

We hope you join in the activities!
Watch for more details coming soon in both email and the U.S. mail!

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
(Matthew 6:21, Luke 12:34)

BAPTISMS

Our best wishes and God's blessings to Easton Alexander and Maeva Annmarie, children of Frank & Julie Bommarito, upon their baptisms on September 12. Easton's sponsors are Kara Clark and Marie Arboscello. Maeva's sponsors are Hilary Beyerlein and Christina Puzzonia. Congratulations, Easton and Maeva!

FAREWELL & GODSPEED

We offer our heartfelt farewell and Godspeed to Kris and Larry Weber who have sold their home and will now be splitting their time between Florida and Wisconsin.

Let us pray. Eternal God, we thank you for Larry and Kris and for our life together in this congregation and community. As they have been a blessing to us, so now send them forth to be a blessing to others; through Jesus Christ our Lord. ***Amen.***

THANK YOU NOTES

"Our heartfelt thanks to each of you who helped at the funeral service for our mother, Betty Ross, on August 9th. We appreciate so much the time you took to greet those who attended, take part in the service as a reader or with communion, and to serve the luncheon afterwards. We are very grateful.

LeeAnne Nagle, David Ross, Barbara Baptist and Deborah Cox"

"Thank you for your generous gift to the children & parents. You have been, and continue to be, partners in our mission with your gifts, your prayers & support. Thank you for your dedication to the Readiness Center Family. We just wrapped up a wonderful summer program and we are gearing up for a great school year. Thank you for being part of it all!

With prayers & gratitude, Martha"

FORTIFY & fly

One of the big 5 issues we identified during the initial Fortify & Fly congregational planning meetings in 2018, was a need to enhance our worship space to allow for increased versatility and accessibility. We are one step closer to addressing that need after the congregational vote on September 12 approved funding for new sanctuary seating, compromised of a mix of upholstered chairs and benches, and technology upgrades, including a nonintrusive mounted camera and various wiring for current and future needs. All involved have worked extremely hard and thoughtfully to balance our need to move forward with maintaining the integrity and beauty of our worship space. It will still be many months before we see the fruits of this labor but we are excited for progress!

As always, we are in awe of your generosity in regards to the Fortify & Fly Campaign. At the end of August 2021, we had collected $357,894 towards our 3-year pledge total of $367,205. We are at 97%!

Worship

NURSERY

Nursery service is available during both services. In order to reduce congestion, the suggested age to utilize this option is approx. 2 yrs and under. For older children, approx. 3-4 years, that need a little more space from time to time, quiet activities are available in the narthex so a caregiver can still hear and participate in worship. **AS ALWAYS, we welcome all kinds of wiggles in worship**!

NEW MEMBERS

Saron will be receiving new members shortly. Please let Pastor know if you are interested in joining Saron, or would like to learn more about the Christian faith in the Lutheran tradition.

PRAYER GROUP

Join us Mondays at 11am for a time of quiet reflection and prayer, which includes lifting up the requests offered on Sundays at worship or via other means. We meet in the sanctuary.

ZOOM COFFEE HOUR

We will continue Wednesday morning Zoom fellowship at 11am into the Fall. Watch for the Zoom link in your email on Tuesdays.

ALTAR FLOWERS

You can sponsor a week by using the link in the weekly email or by calling the church office. Make sure to note any special occasion to be recognized in the bulletin. Flowers are $35 per vase. Please follow up with a check to Saron with "Flowers" on the memo line. Thank you for helping to beautify our worship services! Feel free to take them home after the last service and enjoy. Simply return the vase to Saron at your convenience to be reused.

FACEBOOK

We love to share pictures of Saron's ministry on our Facebook page and we get great feedback. It is our practice not to put names with the pictures. If you have questions, or prefer your picture not to appear, please contact Pastor.

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to read and reflect on the Scriptures for the day.

Sun. October 3 —
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
Genesis 2:18-24
Psalm 8
Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12
Mark 10:2-16

Sun. October 10 —
Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost
Amos 5:6-7, 10-15
Psalm 90:12-17
Hebrews 4:12-16
Mark 10:17-31

Sun. October 17 —
Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost
Isaiah 53:4-12
Psalm 91:9-16
Hebrews 5:1-10
Mark 10:35-45

Sun. October 24 —
Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost
Jeremiah 31:7-9
Psalm 126
Hebrews 7:23-28
Mark 10:46-52

Sun. October 31 —
Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost
Deuteronomy 6:1-9
Psalm 119:1-8
Hebrews 9:11-14
Mark 12:28-34

Youth

We had a great time at our first Youth Group Gathering on September 19 in the beautifully redecorated Saron lounge. We shared a devotion and pizza while Scott Gaspari taught us the intricacies of the board game, GATAN. Next up will be Nintendo on October 17 from 12:30pm-2:30pm. Come join us and reconnect with friends from Saron.

There are also events planned for November 14 and December 12. Watch for more information in emails and we hope to see you. Bring a friend!

For more info, contact Merrily at merrilyannsmith@gmail.com

Learning

Saron is a congregation seeking to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.

LEARNING HOUR

We offer a time of age-appropriate Bible studies between the two services, from **9:40-10:30:**

- **Grades 5 and Under** meet in the Sunday school classroom.
- **Confirmation Students** (Grades 6-8) meet in the confirmation classroom, with a Zoom option available.
- **Adult Forum** meets in the upstairs lounge.

At this time, we will be utilizing masks, per the current BCHD guidance. We look forward to seeing everyone!

We are always looking for volunteers to assist with Sunday School, even just once. Please contact the church office at 269/983-1273 or by email at info@saronlutheran.org with any interest.

TUESDAY EVENING MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

We meet in the lounge on Tuesdays at 6pm and will have discussion until about 7pm. Those who wish then go to a local restaurant for food and more conversation.

- September 14 - October 12: we will discuss various topics by Friar Casey.
- October 19: we will discuss Stewardship and its impact on our church.
- October 26 - November 23: we will have another series of study.

"Iron Sharpens Iron and One Person Sharpens the Wits of Another"

If you have any questions, feel free to call, text or email:
Bob Kynast at 269/921-2786 or bobkynast@gmail.com
Don Hafer at 269/985-3637

1ST SUNDAY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

October 3rd will see us back together, finally, in person! We will meet in the upstairs lounge at 6:30pm. Masks required. There will also be a Zoom component available. Information will be emailed to everyone, as a reminder, before the meeting. Please contact Kathy Cowall (269) 428-0354 or kcowall@hotmail.com if you wish to be included. As always, all are welcome.

The book open for discussion is *"Anxious People*" by Fredrik Backman. From the author of *"a Man Called Ove*", this novel doesn't disappoint. A failed bank robber bursts in to an apartment open house and takes a group of strangers hostage. Each hostage has their own set of hurts, passions and secrets. The hostages are intertwined with each other in ways they don't realize, but are revealed to the reader. "*The enduring power of friendship, forgiveness and hope can save us, even in the most anxious of times*." (Amazon)

Stay tuned for November 7th and "*Save Me the Plums: My Gourmet Memoir*", by Ruth Reichl. Ruth, well-loved food writer and restaurant critic, takes on the challenge of her life as editor and chief of Gourmet Magazine. Reichl's trip into the corporate world comes complete with recipes. *"Poignant and hilarious.....simply delicious*". (NYTimes Book Review) You, as reader, will be informed and entertained. Guaranteed! Please join us for these two selections and more to come. If you love to read and share ideas and opinions, or simply listen, come be with us.

"***Reading brings us unknown friends.***" (Honore de Balzac)

MEN'S MONTHLY BIBLE DEVOTION AND BREAKFAST

Saron Men's 1st Saturday Devotion and Breakfast will meet on Saturday, October 2, at 9am at the Galley Grill Restaurant. The address is 4296 Red Arrow Highway in Stevensville. Dennis will share the devotion, "*Blessed*".

Contact Dennis Lundgren with any questions at dennis.lundgren@me.com.

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

On Thursday, September 9, we began a study on the book of Genesis. It will continue through October. There is no cost for the class. We are meeting on-location in the upstairs lounge and simultaneously via Zoom from 9:30am- 11:00am. Please let Pastor know if you would like the Zoom link. This class is open to all interested in attending.

From the intro: *From the magisterial six-day creation through Adam and Eve, the flood, the sacrifice of Isaac, and the Joseph story, Genesis contains many of the most well-known and beloved passages in the whole Bible. These are texts that have grounded beliefs and shaped faith communities for over two millennia.*

Where do these stories come from? How do they relate to similar traditions from Israel's neighboring cultures, and how have they grown over time until reaching the form we now have them in? How have our modern interpretations obscured what the texts might have originally meant? This study provides new perspectives for appreciating some of the most famous biblical stories.

Women of the ELCA

DEBORAH CIRCLE

We will meet on Wednesday, October 13 at 7pm. The decision to meet on-location or not will be made closer to the meeting date. The lesson is from the July/August 2021 issue of "*Gather*" magazine, titled "*Just L.I.F.E. (Liberation Is For Everyone): Just Truth,*" beginning on page 22. As of when this was written, a study leader is needed for this session.

There is also a meeting planned for Wednesday, November 10 (Church Women's Annual Meeting). Zoom is still available for those wishing to attend remotely. Contact Melanie McCammon for more information at 269/983-4622.

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

As stated in last month's newsletter in detail, this year our Lutheran World Relief project donations will be by check only rather than collecting items for personal care kits and fabric kits. If you wish to participate, please send your check, payable to **Saron Church Women**, to the church by **October 5.** Please write **LWR on the memo line**. The total collected will be sent to LWR Quilt & Kits Shipping Fund. Thank you very much in advance for your generosity by supporting this ministry. Many people benefit from the project.

Hospitality

SUNDAY SNACKS

Who doesn't love a snack during a time of fellowship in the narthex after the service? If you would like to be a Sunday snack host, you can sign up via the link in our weekly email or call/email the office so Amanda can sign you up. We are asking for donations of individual, store-packaged treats at this time. Please plan for 30 to partake. Thank you!

Outreach

God's work. Our hands.

Our youth had a fun time organizing school supplies, making cards, and assembling treat bags for dogs and cats on God's Work, Our Hands Sunday, September 12. Thank you to all those who donated to our school supply drive. Local kids and teachers will benefit greatly from your joyful giving!

NOISY OFFERING

Once again, we are receiving a noisy offering (or those not-so-noisy bills) on the first Sunday of each month. These gifts are then sent to ELCA World Hunger. Thank you for your generous offerings.

BENTON HARBOR SOUP KITCHEN

People ask why the Soup Kitchen is so important. It's simple. Giving a person decent nutrition is the first step on the ladder of making better choices, improving one's health, finding employment, and regaining independence. Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen Newsletter

On August 26, 120 people enjoyed a sack lunch prepared by volunteers from Saron. Deanna Deaton and Dave & Kathie Bradley prepared & assembled the lunches which included hot dogs, an apple, chips and cookies baked by Keith Stevens, Amy Nelson, Frieda Williams, and Mary Alice Brunner.

If you feel comfortable helping to prepare a sack lunch at the Soup Kitchen or baking cookies please use the link in the weekly email to sign-up or contact Kathie Bradley (269-921-4665).

The Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen has served over 500,000 meals in the past 10 years!!! Thank you to all who continue to support this ministry with your time, contributions, & prayers. During this pandemic it is even more important to continue Saron's mission of *Joyfully sharing God's love for all!*

INCLUSIVITY TASK FORCE

The Inclusivity Task Force is committed to extending a welcome to all, especially those listed in our proposed welcome statement, which is included below. We, as a congregation, will vote on this statement on September 26. An affirmative vote would make Saron a Reconciling in Christ congregation.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call any one of the task force members, as listed here.

Connor Ashley: cashley1837@outlook.com
Laurel Gacek: 269/470-6062 or mlmg2445@sbcglobal.net

Laura Hicks: 517/930-0579 or lhicks42@gmail.com
Darlene Kiessel: 269/313-4062 or kiessel@me.com
Diane Madej (Open Hearts. Open Church, N/WLM Synod): 231/670-0328 or dianemadej234@gmail.com
Pastor Joan Oleson: 269/983-1273 or oleson@saronlutheran.org

Here is Saron's proposed Welcome Statement, as affirmed by the council.
"As a community of faith who joyfully shares God's love for all, we believe our lives and faith are strengthened by diversity. We strive to be a community who welcomes people of every ability, age, citizenship status, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, language, marital status, political perspective, race, and sexual orientation. Whatever life's circumstance, we openly welcome and value you. We celebrate God's unconditional love and respond joyfully to your presence here. All are welcome. You are welcome."

INTERFAITH ACTION
Interfaith Action (swmichiganinterfaith.org) is a coalition of over 40 faith communities in Allegan, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, and Van Buren Counties. Some members of Saron attend their meetings and work with various task force groups. One of the goals of Interfaith Action is to promote understanding and respect for diversity. We hope this discussion will advance that goal by enriching our appreciation for our shared humanity.

Join Saron and Interfaith Action of SW Michigan in collecting **rice, beans, toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap and shampoo** for migrant workers and farmers living in poverty. A box for collecting donations is in the narthex.

Also mark your calendars for the annual Celebration of the Harvest to be held outside at **Tabor Hill Vineyards on Oct 10 at 3pm**. This is an inspirational service where you will be inspired by religious music ranging from an Islamic Call to Prayer, a Jewish cantor, Acappella music from an Andrews University choral group, and Latinx music from the San Gabriel choir. All this in the midst of a beautiful vineyard!

Support

The Support Committee will continue meeting on the second Monday of each month at 8pm. Meetings will continue to be held on Zoom. Contact Don Hafer with any questions at 269/985-3637.

STOCK DONATIONS
Saron partners with TD Ameritrade, a brokerage firm, to accept stock donations. If you would like to donate stock, email Joe Ulrey at josephulrey@yahoo.com to receive more information. Thanks!

Facilities

HELPING HANDS (Previously Golden Hammers)
We do all sorts of things from building maintenance to preps for worship in the sanctuary to assembling bulletins and newsletters and so much more. Watch for details about when this newly renamed group will begin their work again and know that you are invited – whatever your age, gender, or ability. There will be a job for you to use your helping hands.

PIANO AVAILABLE
Do you or someone you know have need of a piano? Saron will have one available to a good home in exchange for the new owner arranging for its move. Contact the church office for more info.

SARON LUTHERAN CHURCH
510 MAIN STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email:info@saronlutheran.org

A Congregation of:
The North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Pictures from Vicar Patrick's Welcome and God's Work, Our Hands Sunday.

ALL SAINTS REMEMBRANCE

On All Saints Sunday, November 7, we will remember at worship those who have gone before us and have joined the church triumphant. If you would like someone to be remembered by name, please respond with the following information by 8am on November 1.

Please note that we begin the list of those remembered new each year. We do not carry names forward, unless asked to do so.

PERSON(S) TO BE REMEMBERED: _____

RELATIONSHIP (BROTHER, MOTHER, ETC):_____

PERSON(S) TO BE REMEMBERED: _____

RELATIONSHIP (BROTHER, MOTHER, ETC):_____

PERSON(S) TO BE REMEMBERED: _____

RELATIONSHIP (BROTHER, MOTHER, ETC):_____

PERSON SUBMITTING REQUEST:_____

October 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2 9am Men's Devotion & Breakfast
3 8:30am Worship 9:40am Learning 11am Worship with Zoom option	**4** 11am Prayer Group	**5** 6pm Men's Bible Study	**6** 11am Zoom Coffee Hour 9:30 Helping Hands	**7** 9:30am Bible Study 6pm Bells 7pm Choir	**8** Pastor on Vacation →	9
10 8:30am Worship 9:40am Learning 11am Worship with Zoom option	**11** 11am Prayer Group 8pm Support Meeting	**12** 6pm Men's Bible Study	**13** 11am Zoom Coffee Hour 9:30 Helping Hands	**14** 9:30am Bible Study 6pm Bells 7pm Choir	**15** Pastor Returns	16
17 8:30am Worship 9:40am Learning 11am Worship with Zoom option	**18** 11am Prayer Group 7pm Council Meeting **NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE**	**19** 6pm Men's Bible Study	**20** 11am Zoom Coffee Hour 9:30 Helping Hands	**21** 9:30am Bible Study 6pm Bells 7pm Choir	**22**	23
24/31* 8:30am Worship 9:40am Learning 11am Worship with Zoom option	**25** 11am Prayer Group	**26** 6:00pm Men's Bible Study	**27** 11am Zoom Coffee Hour 9:30 Helping Hands Newsletter Assembly	**28** 9:30am Bible Study 6pm Bells 7pm Choir	**29**	30

* October 31 is Reformation Sunday and Commitment Sunday